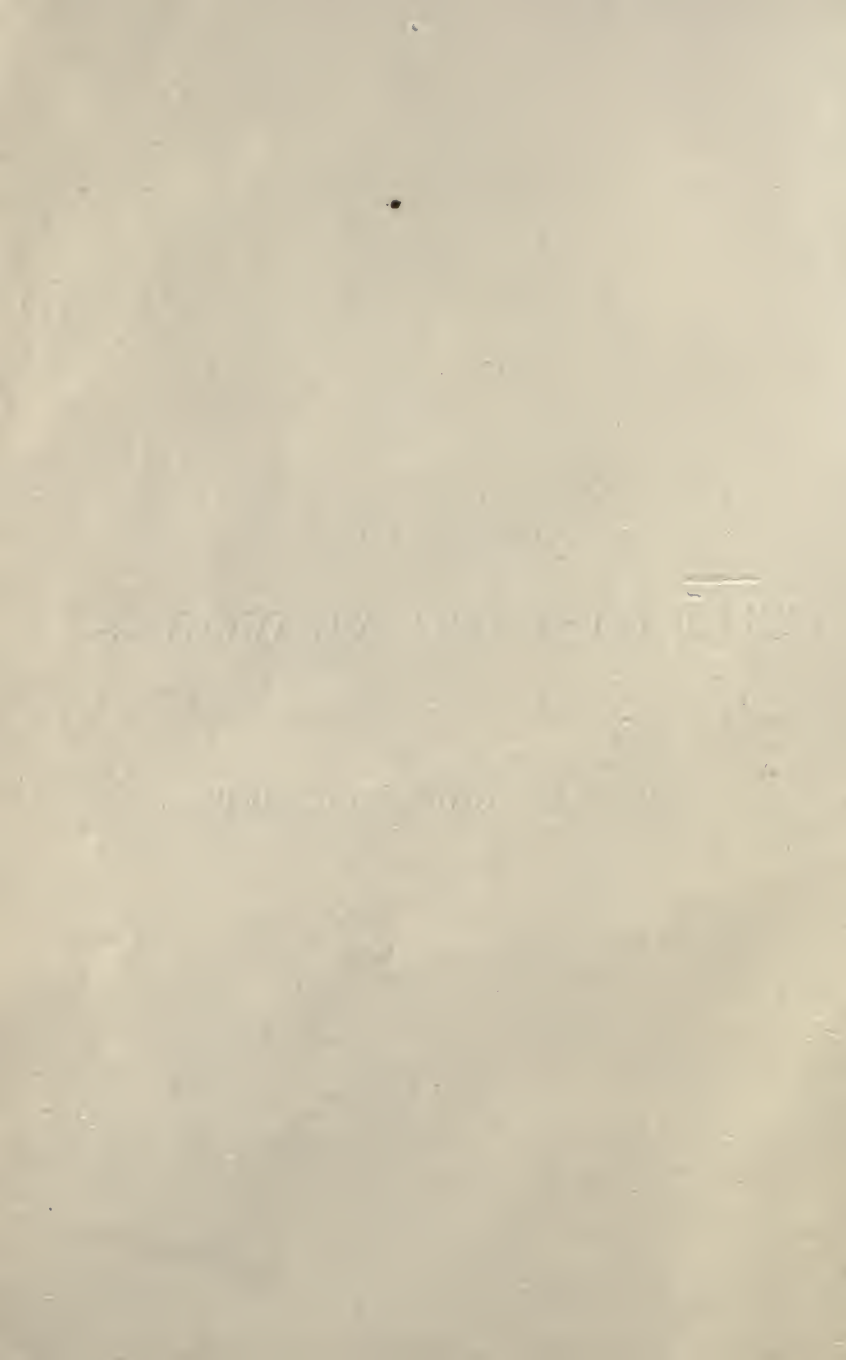


COMPLETION OF
THE HISTORICAL WORKS
OF
HUBERT HOWE BANCROFT



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The publication of the Historical Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft, is now completed. The series consists of the following works:

- Native Races of the Pacific States, 5 vols.
- History of Central America, 3 vols.
- History of Mexico, 6 vols.
- History of Texas and the North Mexican States, 2 vols.
- History of Arizona and New Mexico, 1 vol.
- History of California, 7 vols.
- History of Nevada, Colorado, and Wyoming, 1 vol.
- History of Utah, 1 vol.
- History of the Northwest Coast, 2 vols.
- History of Oregon, 2 vols.
- History of Washington, Idaho, and Montana, 1 vol.
- History of British Columbia, 1 vol.
- History of Alaska, 1 vol.
- California Pastoral, 1 vol.
- California Inter Pocula, 1 vol.
- Popular Tribunals, 2 vols.
- Essays and Miscellany, 1 vol.
- Literary Industries, 1 vol.

Each of the above works is complete in itself, though written with reference to the others, thereby economizing space and saving repetition. The volumes are in size octavo, of about 800 pages each, and are published at the uniform price of \$4.50 a volume in cloth, and \$5.50 in sheep

binding; half morocco, \$6.50; full morocco, \$8.00. Maps and illustrations are freely employed whenever deemed essential. The Biographical Section of Mr Bancroft's historical series, entitled *Chronicles of the Builders of the Commonwealth*, is separate from the above, and is still in course of preparation.

It is universally admitted by the prominent men of Europe and America that this is the most remarkable literary undertaking of the age. "It took the world of scholars by storm" says Sir Arthur Helps, having in mind the words of Mr Herbert Spencer, who wrote the author, "I am finding your collection of facts very valuable for my own more immediate ends in writing the *Principles of Sociology*," while the *London Academy* pronounces it "the most colossal literary achievement of the nineteenth century." The territory covered, which is equivalent to one twelfth of the earth's surface, comprises the western half of North America, including the whole of Mexico and Central America. For this territory the foundations of history are in these volumes forever laid. "From these volumes," says a writer in the *Century*, "must be drawn hereafter the only trustworthy history of these parts." No one can ever undermine or gainsay the facts as herein presented, being derived to a great extent directly from participators in and eye-witnesses of the events. "Nothing more national or complete is ever likely to be seen" writes the editor of the *Glasgow Herald*, while the *New York Tribune* early testified that it was "recognized as an authority of the first rank."

The collection of material for the historical works of Mr Bancroft was begun by the author in 1858, and his library, for which he erected a fire-proof brick building in San Francisco, has continued to grow from that day to this. "It is safe to say that no amount of wealth would make it possible at this day to gather such a library," writes Mr Scott in the *Oregonian*, and the *British Quarterly Review* declares that "no tribute can be too great to the industry and research of the author." The *New York Tribune* declares that "there is nothing in the world which exactly corresponds in value, in interest, in abundance, and in completeness, with this priceless library;" and "never," says *The Nation*, "was a large library more thoroughly ransacked or more completely laid under tribute by a writer."

The publication of the historical series proper began in 1875, and ended in 1891. Thus, including the preparation and execution of this great work, no less than thirty-three years were occupied by the author, with the constant help of from fifteen to twenty able assistants—an army of workers involving enormous labor and expense; so that the *Chicago Inter-Ocean* speaks within bounds when it calls it “an undertaking of great magnitude, which only a fortune, united with the requisite energy and scholarly acquirements of the author, could have reached;” likewise the *Boston Congregationalist*, which asserts that “the history of literature does not contain a single example of a grander literary purpose, a more thorough preparation, or a more successful achievement.”

That this work,—that is, the collection of the material and the writing and publishing of these histories,—was a work worth doing, a work which ought to be done, being in every sense to the highest advantage of the country and every person in it; and that it has been well and faithfully done, there is abundance of the highest testimony. First as to the author’s ability. Says the *Boston Post*, “The industry, the sound judgment, and the excellent literary style displayed in this work cannot be too highly praised. It stands quite alone of its class in this department.”

“He has applied the scientific methods of history-writing in a manner never before dreamed of.”—*Record-Union*.

“Beyond all the patient labor in marshalling details, Mr Bancroft shows also a sound, healthy literary judgment.”—*Atlantic Monthly*.

“He has investigated with the most conscientious care and criticised with no little skill the enormous mass of official documents which in different ways relate to his subject; and he has digested the results of his laborious toil into a narrative clear, logical, and attractive.”—*London Times*.

“You have handled a complex, sometimes even tangled and tautological subject with much clearness and discrimination.”—*J. R. Lowell*.

“The plan of the great work has been honored in the execution.”—*Daily Oregonian*.

“It is a monument of well-directed industry and great ability.”—*Edinburgh Scotsman*.

"A lasting monument to the scholarship and ability of its author."—*Louisville Courier-Journal*.

"An excellent example of a kind of work which only a true historian could do. The volume is worthy of its author's reputation—a monument of industry, of care and grasp, and philosophical penetration."—*British Quarterly Review*.

"Those who have followed Mr Bancroft in his noble literary undertaking have learned to trust both his learning and his judgment. No author of this or any former period has undergone so rigid a discipline, and few have shown so strong a faculty for arranging facts, coupled with so trustworthy a discrimination and sense of proportion."—*N. Y. Tribune*.

"Mooted questions are discussed with such a fullness of information as to compel assent to the cautious conclusions drawn."—*N. Y. Post*.

"I am amazed at the extent and minuteness of your researches."—*William Cullen Bryant*.

"What strikes me most in it is the exceeding fairness with which he treats the researches and the theories of other inquirers into subjects akin to his own."—*Sir Arthur Helps*.

"Mr Bancroft's narrative might well be adopted as a textbook in colleges and universities for the strong light it throws upon national evolution."—*N. Y. Tribune*.

"In romantic interest the book has a marvellous charm, with no violation of the real, a brilliant picture with no unpardonable overcolor."—*Sac. Record-Union*.

"In no volume that Mr Bancroft has written has he woven a more lively interest than in this."—*Boston Home Journal*.

"Prof Royce takes no pains to conceal his generous admiration of the work done by Mr Bancroft."—*New York Independent*.

"In the line of historical research his work has no parallel. Of the volumes of manuscripts and printed books named, all are either in the possession of Mr Bancroft or have been used by him in the preparation of his work. One class of manuscripts secured by Mr Bancroft deserves especial mention as being unique in character, and those are dictations, or personal reminiscences; and of these he has many hundreds."—*Boston Traveller*.

Of the work itself, a volume could not contain all that has been said in its praise. John G. Whittier pronounces it, "one of the noblest literary enterprises of the day." Thomas Carlyle calls it "exceedingly interesting and important." Clarence King says "it is simply fascinating." A. K. Spofford, librarian of congress, classifies it as "a monument of literary and historical industry."

The *Journal of Science* says "the work forms one of the most valuable contributions of modern times, and should have an honored place in every well-selected library," while the talented John W. Draper writes to the author, "Your work has taught me a great many things. It needs no praise from me. It will be consulted and read centuries after you are gone." "The work has no parallel in literature" declares Henry Ward Beecher.

In regard to style, the highest praise comes from the best judges. Pages might be given of such testimonials as the following: "His style is clear and without affectation, recalling the straightforward simplicity of Herodotus."—*London Westminster Review*.

"He writes well and gracefully."—*New York Sun*.

"I am full of admiration at the immense reading it displays, and at the singular, vivid, and graceful English in which that reading is expressed."—*W. H. Lecky*.

"The work is intensely interesting. Mr Bancroft's style is clear, his arrangement of materials judicious, and his symmetry admirable."—*Chicago Journal*.

"Striking passages are welded together with a logical cohesion so strict that it is almost impossible to detach them."—*New York Herald*.

"I am particularly pleased with the sharp, condensed form in which the facts are given."—*Oliver Wendell Holmes*.

"Mr Bancroft's style deserves great commendation."—*S. F. Bulletin*.

"The information has been digested into a flowing and entertaining narrative."—*New York Observer*.

"Clear, concise, forcible, and well adapted to the requirement of modern students."—*Overland Monthly*.

"Here is that close minuteness of research, fullness of detail, and firmness in tone which makes his work the standard authority on whatever field it touches. Many extracts might be conveniently given as examples of the

author's chastened elegance of style, as well as the judiciousness of his reflections."—*Glasgow Herald*.

Now, if all this is true ; if the author is not in error as to the great importance of gathering this material, of saving from oblivion an immense mass of valuable knowledge which but for him would have been forever lost, of taking from the mouths of thousands of living witnesses, who are fast passing away, what they have seen and done while this great building up of the western world has been going on ; if the learned men throughout the world are not in error, those capable of knowing what is valuable in human development, and of judging of historical work, whether or not it is properly done,—if this is true, then these works should be in every library worthy to be called a library. For surely every library should have in it a history of the world, and the history of the world is not complete, and never can be complete, without these volumes. This latest and magnificent west, with its half-century of marvellous development, such as has revolutionized the world's commerce and industries, could scarcely be left out. Within the territory here covered have been worked out some of the grandest problems of civilization, and which are as full of importance to the race as any of ancient Greece or Rome. To make any advance, it is necessary to know what is and has been ; for then only can we form an idea of what may be.

ADDRESS

THE HISTORY COMPANY

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

OR F. M. DERBY

149 CHURCH ST., NEW YORK CITY

ESSAYS AND MISCELLANY

[From the *New York Tribune*, Oct. 22, 1890.]

In this volume Mr Bancroft, now nearing the end of his labors, has brought together a number of essays and miscellaneous papers, many, if not most, of which, have grown out of his reading for the "History of the Pacific Coast." In all such extensive literary enterprises there accumulates much matter which, while often incapable of being worked into the main scheme, represents too much research to be thrown away, and this kind of matter naturally and properly takes form in supplementary essays. But in the volume before us there are several papers of quite a different origin. In these the author appears to have sought opportunity to free his mind of certain positive conclusions and strongly held views upon various controverted questions. As regards some of these Mr Bancroft's views are such as to expose him to attack from several directions ; but those who most strongly differ from him must acknowledge that he exhibits the full courage of his convictions ; that he is deterred from saying what he thinks by no fear of condemnation ; and that the attainment of truth is manifestly his sole end and aim. The essays on "The Early American Chroniclers," "Literature of Central America," "Literature of Colonial Mexico," and "Literature of Mexico during the Present Century," are papers which show ripe knowledge and thorough research, but deal with matters of less than general interest. The conclusion apt to be reached by the average reader is that neither in Mexico nor in Central America is there, or has there ever been, a literature deserving serious consideration. That conclusion, indeed, is not far from the truth, for between the paralyzing influence of the church, the constant disturbance of intestine agitations, and the undeveloped intellectualism of the mixed races concerned, literature has had little opportunity to strike a deep root, or to produce any important work.

Mr Bancroft makes full allowance for all these drawbacks and obstacles, yet he allows more weight and value to many Mexican books than the world at large has done or is at all likely to do. His admission that so far the Latin races on this continent have done little more than imitate foreign writers, is a damaging one as regards any claim for consideration on the ground of originality; and it cannot be said that he advances much in illustration of Mexican or Central American inventive or creative power. We pass from these essays, with all their erudition, somewhat willingly, and turn to those in which the author delivers his own mind with that uncompromising candor which is a distinguishing trait of his character. It is, moreover, so alien a quality to the popular habit of the time that it produces the effect of a return from artificiality to nature. Among the changes which nineteenth century civilization has wrought upon thought and expression is the practice of an emasculating avoidance of direct and wholly unambiguous discussion and statement. Issuing in the growth of a new sensibility, which shrinks from hurting the feelings even of those who are believed to be wholly and mischievously in the wrong, and reinforced by the spread of a scepticism which breeds indifference toward the most vital problems, this tendency has already gone far to confuse in the minds of many the fundamental distinction between truth and falsehood, and to commend the exercise of a dissimulation which has ceased to be considered a mark of cowardice or hypocrisy, and is indulgently regarded as a philosophical way of making life easier.

Mr Bancroft is by nature quite incapable of adapting himself to the new method. Neither his character nor his training fits him for such compromises and such systematic palterings. Thirty years of downright labor in chiseling the naked truth of history out of a huge block of mixed material cannot prepare a man for the practice of equivocation, shuffling, or tergiversation. Such a lifetime of virtual detachment from public affairs is very certain to have another consequence. The author, being under no obligations to faction or party, having no interests to serve by softening or withholding his views of men and measures and movements, is apt to speak out with a plainness and emphasis very surprising and disconcerting to all whose long habituation to partisan methods has dulled the edge of their ethical sensitiveness. Such a man does not express himself with a view

to catching popular applause, and therefore he neither conceals nor flatters nor writes with his eyes shut. Mr Bancroft, for example, squarely traverses the dominant opinion of the Pacific coast upon the Chinese question. In the essay "Two Sides of a Vexed Question," he certainly gives both sides with the utmost fairness, and with a frank rejection of disguise peculiarly his own; but he sums up against the anti-Chinese sentiment on the whole case, and with deliberation and a judicial air. His essay on "Our Treatment of the Native Races," is an equally bold presentation of the subject, but it deals with a subject regarding which no such feeling exists, and it will provoke little, if any, remonstrance. The facts unhappily are altogether too notorious for denial to be availing. It is unquestionably true that in the early times of California the native Americans were outrageously ill-used by brutal Missourians and other frontier people, who were themselves tenfold more barbarous than the Mexicans they despised.

It is not less unquestionably true that the Chinese, though tolerated at first, were soon subjected to a cruel persecution; and this not only by lawless miners, but by cowardly and demagogical legislatures, which traded upon the political impotence of their victims. But the Chinese had really less cause for complaint than the native Californians, for the latter were the original owners of the land, and most of them were robbed of their estates by all manner of fraud and chicanery; while such as had no real property were often hounded like pariahs. Mr Bancroft lays the lash on the guilty unsparingly, and his treatment of this somewhat outworn topic prepares the reader for the spirit in which the author enters upon a discussion of "The Jury System," and "Money and Monopoly." In the first of these essays the historian seems to have assumed the rôle of iconoclast. The jury system, as viewed by its failures and defects, strikes him as obsolete, and he does not hesitate to say so. No doubt much may be urged on that side of the question; but apart from all consideration of the weight of conservatism and tradition which tend to maintain all long established institutions, even when they are palpably outgrown, no practical discussion of such a topic can omit the presentation of a substitute for the condemned institution; and this Mr Bancroft has neglected to do. According to him it would be much better, in criminal cases, to leave the deci-

sion to the judge. In dealing with the lesser offences, misdemeanors, etc., this method is already employed in several of the states, and in all municipal systems. But Mr Bancroft does not believe that the judiciary, under existing political modes, is trustworthy in general; and if that be the case, how could it be relied on to supersede juries?

The essays entitled "The New Civilization," "Social Analysis," "Nation Making," deal with the evolution of society in the far west, and with that of California in particular. Though Mr Bancroft sees clearly and records plainly the various abuses and wrongs which have been worked out in the development of these young communities, no writer has expressed himself more hopefully, or, indeed, more enthusiastically, regarding the future of the Pacific states. Some, in fact, may think that his anticipations are rather in excess of the justification for them, and may doubt whether the peculiarities which marked the organization of these newer states are such as to afford ground for the expectation that a higher civilization will develop there than the older states have succeeded in attaining. Certainly—and Mr Bancroft points this out himself with sufficient insistence—the development thus far has been mainly upon materialistic lines, and whatever special intellectual forces have been evolved have gravitated more in that direction than toward literature and art. This, no doubt, is the natural effect of the circumstances, but while those circumstances are practically unchanged it would seem rather premature to look for the marked transformation which is here welcomed in anticipation. Three papers, on "History Writing," "Criticism," and "Work," proceed obviously from the literary labors upon which Mr Bancroft has been so long engaged. The first of these may be said to set forth the motives and principles upon which the historian of the Pacific coast has himself proceeded. No one who is familiar with his works can fail to recognize this in his strong argument for impartiality, the elimination of prejudice and prepossession, and the vital importance of thorough research into the sources of history. It is true that very few historians have had like opportunities with him to get to the very foundations, for none have had at command the same wealth of material. His observations, however, are all the more weighty on this account, for he knows all the difficulty of arriving at trustworthy conclusions in the face of opposed and irreconcilable statements.

The essay on "Criticism" is really a critique of the critics, and it is hardly competent for one of the latter to review such a paper dispassionately perhaps. Much of what Mr Bancroft says is, however, not easy to controvert; and as, according to the fashion of poor human nature, assailed critics may take refuge among those who are declared praiseworthy, it is possible that few will think it worth while to take issue with the essayist. The case is one in which the French proverb—"Qui s'excuse, s'accuse"—applies with unmistakable force. There are honest critics, says Mr Bancroft, and there are dishonest ones. Whoever dissents from such a statement inevitably lays himself open to the suspicion of sympathizing with, if not of belonging to, the latter. Moreover, critics are supposed to be pachydermatous, and have always been considered fair game for authors.

They have, in the present instance at least, the consolation of reflecting that the California historian does not go the length of one or two modern writers and advocate the total extinction of criticism, as in some sort a sacrilegious and wicked business. All that he asks is the application of fair play, honesty, and some conscientious examination in the exercise of the critical function; and there are those who may think the proposition not overbold or unreasonable, though whether it is a practical one, failing a rather radical amendment in human nature, is another question. The essay on "Work," is the energetic expression of a worker, and perhaps it does not sufficiently take into consideration the position of that large class who appear to have come into the world already fatigued. It is nevertheless a positively refreshing vindication of the blessings of hard work, and written with a sincerity, the best proof of which lies in the writer's own remarkable achievements.

"Mongolianism in America," is a detailed and highly graphic and interesting description of Chinese life and manners as seen in San Francisco. It is, we think, the fullest and most detailed account of the kind that has appeared. The Chinese quarter of San Francisco has been thoroughly explored from end to end, and everything and everybody in it is put on record in these pages with almost photographic minuteness. Chinese theatres, restaurants, stores, joss-houses, private dwellings, house and street life, amusements, games of chance, occupations of every kind, crimes and criminals, industrial and commercial progress, etc., are exploited, and with scrupulous fidelity to the truth and an

entire absence of sensationalism and exaggeration. It is a really admirable and altogether reliable picture, and its value is the greater in that it is simply a picture, and not the groundwork for any theories or speculations or recommendations. The facts speak for themselves, and nothing more is needed. A very interesting essay is that on "Early California Literature," in which, while much useful and recondite information is given concerning the writers who lived before the American period, the chief attraction is the portion dealing with those who went to California in and after the gold discovery. One result of that momentous event was to stimulate local authorship. During the first twenty-five years more than 200 books about the golden state were published, though none of them were remarkable for excellence in any respect. To write anything like a full account of California early literature, however, would demand an intimate acquaintance with a Bohemian society which for many years lived its own life in San Francisco; which produced a considerable number of really brilliant writers; which controlled the tone of California literature, such as it was, and which has long since wholly disappeared and been replaced by quite other conditions and men.

The concluding essay in the volume is called "Plato Revised." It is an examination, not formal and perhaps not wholly serious, thrown into the form of the Socratic dialogue, of the claims upon credibility of tradition and intuition in various matters, and especially as regards theogonies. The central idea is worked out with decided ingenuity and not a little dialectic skill and subtlety. Plato, who, with Socrates and other intimates of the Porch, are supposed to meet somewhere in No-Man's Land to discuss the changes that have occurred since their time, engage in discussions which generally result in the demolition of poor Plato's positions. It is rather long, but will repay the reader. Mr Bancroft in these varied literary excursions has shown that the love and quest of truth which characterize his historical writings are ingrained in him, and also that he has carried his inquiries far beyond the already wide sphere of his special labors. The essays are the work of a strong and straightforward thinker, and of one who is never afraid of logical consequences.

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